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ing as a result of the introduction of machinery, society may be benefited through a general advance in wages of labor attended with the least amount of friction between employers and employees and with the least chance of additional burden upon the public." It is evident that this is equivalent to saying that wages should be determined not by economic principles but by social expediency. The author further emphasized this way of looking at the problem when he later contended that inability of the industry to pay should not be allowed to affect wage advances and that wages should seldom, if ever, be reduced during periods of business depression.

Not alone students of the labor problem will profit from a study of this well written volume. Students of economic theory will find it valuable as a means of testing the validity and practicability of their theories when an attempt is made to apply them to the problem of wage determination.

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Unemployment and American Trade Unions. By D. P. SMELSER.
(Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press. 1919. Pp. 154.)

Dr. Smelser makes a valuable contribution to the study of the problem of unemployment in this monograph dealing with the methods and policies of trade unions designed to provide employment and prevent idleness among their members. Up to the present, most students of the subject have treated the employment policies of trade unions in generalities only. When our public authorities begin to deal with unemployment seriously as a permanent industrial problem, the practice of American trade unions will be a better basis for action than any European experience, because organized labor will support no unemployment program that does not embody its main policies, if for no other reason. And a government program for dealing with unemployment, however well designed, cannot succeed without the support of organized labor.

Two main sources of information as to the extent and nature of unemployment among organized wage-earners are considered by the author: the statistics published by the states of Massachusetts and New York, and the returns gathered by trade unions themselves. The New York statistics show a percentage of unemployment more than double that of Massachusetts, and this is ex-

plained by the preponderance of seasonal trades in the New York returns. Unemployment statistics published by the New Hampshire Department of Labor are characterized as "practically valueless," and these are the only other unemployment statistics published by state bureaus the author has been able to find. The statistics collected by American trade unions are analyzed in detail and Dr. Smelser uses them for making deductions as to the volume and character of unemployment in some of the principal trades.

He seeks the trade-union theory of unemployment in the union "policies" which have as their object a solution of the problem of unemployment" and to this end "numerous union rules, regulations, customs and policies which bear some relation to unemployment" are explained and analyzed. "Unions generally regard the amount of work which is to be done as a fixed quantity." The restrictions placed by many unions on the admission of new members are explained on this theory. Some limit the number of apprentices, others make no attempt to organize those outside the union and many will grant non-members permits to work at the trade for specified periods when work is plentiful, but will not grant them membership cards. Policies of another kind cited as resulting from the same theory are, restriction of output, shortening the work day and regulation of overtime.

The local union as an employment bureau has been lauded by many writers, but few writers have taken the trouble to study its methods and its principles as a placement agency. Dr. Smelser shows that the national unions have given little consideration to this question but formally or informally the local unions do a great deal of placement work. Where a business agent is employed one of his main functions is to find jobs for members. In organized shops the representative of the union, known variously as shop chairman, collector or steward, is required to notify the union of vacancies and to see that union members fill them. Out of work lists are kept at union headquarters and reports of those out of work are made at union meetings. The author attempts "to show the superiority of the trade union over other existing employment bureaus as a means of connecting the unemployed with employers in need of them."

While the local unions handle local placement of members, national unions have concerned themselves with inter-local distribution of labor. Some unions have established what amounts to a

national employment bureau in their trade. Others distribute lists of opportunities for employment after they have tried to fill vacancies from lists of unemployed members sent in by the local unions. The journals published by national unions are also commonly used for distributing labor market information. A number of national unions pay traveling benefits or make loans to members desiring to seek employment in distant cities. All this work, however, is greatly interfered with by the disinclination of local unions to have outsiders come to the city to add to the local labor supply.

Besides distributing workers locally and nationally, unions have attempted to distribute work among their members during slack periods. They have adopted rules shortening hours or the number of work days per week or for alternate layoffs, all designed to spread the available work among as many members as possible. Some unions, on the contrary, have seniority rules which give the available work to older employees.

Finally, American unions have experimented with unemployment insurance, though to a very limited extent. "The systems generally have been well planned but poorly administered." The result is that local unions are frequently taking up collections for the benefit of needy unemployed members.

While Dr. Smelser's descriptions of trade-union activities in relation to unemployment are exhaustive, his conclusions may be much modified by studies of other materials than those that can be secured from trade-union sources. Other statistics of unemployment than those considered in the monograph, such as the manufacturing returns of the census and of various states as well as data published by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Ohio Industrial Commission, throw much light on the extent and character of unemployment among organized wage-earners. A study of the methods and principles of public employment bureaus the world over will hardly bear out the conclusion that union employment agencies are superior to the others. The rules, regulations and policies which the author ascribes to the "fixed amount of work" theory of unemployment may also be found to result from other causes than this theory, if the attitude of the unorganized workers toward restriction of output, "spoiling the job," and shortening the hours had been studied. These policies may be the instinctive reactions of all workers toward cer-

tain policies of labor management rather than the expression of any theory of unemployment.

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Industry and Humanity. By W. L. MACKENZIE KING. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1918. Pp. 567. \$3.00.)

Dr. King brings to this study of the principles underlying industrial reconstruction an unusual preparation along both academic and practical lines. His experience as Minister of Labour in Canada and his connection with the Rockefeller Foundation together with travel and observation world-wide in extent should give unusual concreteness, vividness, and value to anything he might write on the labor question. One finds, however, a certain diffuseness of statement and indulgence in generalities, and at times an unconscious avoidance of the main issue. The shadow of the Great War hangs over the book and affords a text to be applied to industrial strife. The explanation that industrial disputes, like wars, are due to a certain blindness in human nature is true to a certain extent but is too simple to explain all the facts. Divergence of interest must be reckoned with also. Harmony of economic interests is not brought about by a phrase. Even a correct knowledge of facts does not lead men to perfection. Wars continue in spite of education. Germany, with twenty-one universities, looked upon war as a profitable undertaking. German Kultur and the German sword were to evangelize the world.

A recognition that glittering generalities are a snare and a delusion is shown on page 429; for in speaking of government in industry these words of Sir Edward Coke are quoted: "Was it ever known that general words were a sufficient satisfaction for general grievances? The King's answer is very gracious; but what is the law of the realm? that is the question. I put no diffidence in His Majesty; but the King must speak by record, and in particulars, and not in general." The same procedure is necessary in dealing with the relations between capital and labor. Political equality in citizenship and absolute monarchy or despotism in industry can not live together; but the concrete way, or ways, out is the question at issue.

Aside from these strictures the book is full of interesting facts and comments. A spiritual interpretation of life is put in the place